

My \$8.00 putter...

Since my pal [jamiahsh](#) mentioned my \$8.00 putter, I guess now is a good time to tell how I happen to own said putter. I am not a golfer by any means. I've played maybe 2 games of golf in my lifetime. In both games, I did lousy. My drives were short, but straight, my short game was all over the place, and putting on a real green, forget about it. The one thing I do reasonably well with a golf ball is miniature golf, especially the par 2 [Putt Putt](#) courses. I've played on a few, and while I'm nowhere near to being a Putt Putt pro, I usually can break or make par on these courses after a round or two to get used to it. As with any sport, someday you just don't have it, so I don't always make par.

Anyway, on to the story of my \$8.00 putter. A few of years ago (was it really so long??, yes, it was during our magic show) a group of us were invited to have a day at the nearest Putt Putt / Go-Cart place. I got to the town a little early and we stopped at a local sporting goods store. I'm not sure now if I stopped with the thought of picking up a putter, or just saw it when I got there, and had the idea, but anyway C is a slightly competitive person, and his friends know this about him. Me, I'm never beyond trying to set someone up for a joke, so knowing about his nature, I wanted something to play games with his mind.

So I picked up the cheapest putter available at the sporting goods store. For 8 American dollars, I picked up a putter that was much better than the clubs at the local Putt Putt. And it gave me a wonderful joke to play on the rest of the gang. I arrive at the Putt Putt with putter in hand. Now everybody thought that I was a serious putter. I saw fear in their eyes. (not really but it sounds good doesn't it?) I did have a really good game that day, having quite a few holes-in-one and ended up in first. I was lucky my putter worked. I may have looked a fool if I didn't have a good game. After that I don't

think too many believed that I just picked the putter up that day. They can comment if they remember. But I think my youngest convinced them.

So now, I always have that putter with me during the summer months. My youngest and I frequent the putting places often, and I've grown used to my stick. Sometimes, like today, it brings out the fear in my opponents... Ha ha ha (how do you write an evil laugh???)

Have truck, will deliver

Or the continuing story of 1 guy and his truck.

I have a small bed pickup (2004 Chevy Colorado, crew cab), and I do use this thing as a truck. I bought it to be a truck, and to move people (hence the crew cab), and that is how I use it.

A couple of weekends ago it was used to carry 5 people to an animal park and haunted house. Approx 4 hour drive (not including the animal park) and everyone got home safe. Today it was used as a truck. Moving a few pieces of furniture needed for the latest stage production, I visited 3 houses and pick up 1 coffee table, 1 stereo rack, 1 couch, a couple of posters and 1 folding table. Not all in one trip, the couch took up the rear bed with the gate down.

This is not the first time I've used my truck to move various things for the theater, or myself. Over the past four years, I've moved lots of firewood, plywood, refrigerators, dishwashers, washing machines, stuff from my daughter's apartment, equipment needed for a magic show, stage flats, and almost anything else that could fit in the bed.

After 4 years, I still like this truck. Even with gas being \$4.00 a gallon, I like this truck.

I hope to keep the truck for a good long time, and I plan on driving it until it drops. Still get around 25 miles to the gallon on the highway (no load), so it isn't really too bad to drive to and from work. And I guess for the next few years, the people I know will say, I know somebody with a truck, and he doesn't mind moving things....

A day with Family and Friends

I spent most of the day at the home of my eldest daughter and her husband. They were having an Open house for friend and family. Since it was close to 90 today, and they have a pool, it was a good day to be there. I spent too much time in the sun, I ate too much, and I had a wonderful time.

I met more of my daughter's in-laws (again for the first time, the wedding doesn't count). But since her husband is 1 of 17 children, I don't try to keep them all straight. I would just get them mixed up anyway.

I didn't count how many of the siblings were there, but there were a couple of faces I didn't recognize. There was also a friend or two that I didn't recognize either. So putting people into families was difficult. The funny thing I don't think it matters much at my daughter's house. It seems like the people who are invited in are family. They may be that long lost cousin you sometimes wish was still lost, but they seem to be family. It is a very inviting place to visit.

Now, over the years I've had reservations about my daughter's choice of friends. I don't recall mentioning this too often.

This was of course due to fear of having her cling to them more than she was. We all know how some teenagers can get. If the parent approves, avoid. If the parent disapproves, attach. My eldest had this little quirk. If she still does, well when/if she reads this blog, she may avoid a lot of friends. You see, I approve of her friends. They are characters to be sure, and they would tend to agree with that statement. But they are good friends to my daughter. And as with everything in my family, that is important.

It doesn't really matter what I think, or don't think of the people my girls hang around with. What is really important is how they treat my daughters, and what my daughters thinks of them. It has been that way for as long as I've had daughters. This is one of the reasons I never said anything about my daughters' friends. As long as they were happy, it was good. Even if I noticed something a little off, it was good. Now that 3 out of the 4 are legal adults, and 2 out of 4 are actually of legal drinking age, I've noticed that this way of thinking about things really paid off. All 4 can make very wise decisions on who they want to hang with. They know who they like, and they try to avoid those they can't get along with. It's good to see parenting work out right every now and again.

Now I guess I should write about the food. They really did it right. Burgers, dogs, chicken, salads, deserts, chips, drinks, everything for a summer gathering was available. (except nobody brought watermelon, I should have gotten watermelon, why didn't I get watermelon... Oh yes, the last one I brought was turned into a vodka-watermelon slushy.) We ate well. There was one funny thing. I was thinking of having an iced coffee today. Normally I think iced coffee is to be left somewhere, not to be ingested. Every once in a while I get a taste for it. My daughter had some freshly made when I walked in the door. What a lovely coincidence. I couldn't have planned that better if I had called ahead. So today was a good day...

Time and Numbers

Every so often I write something to try to get some of the lurkers, who read my blog, to stop and say hi. This is another of those posts.

I am a numbers person, so I am fascinated by the statistics that are generated for this blog. Some topics seem to bring more people. Books, Haunted houses, Star Wars, Indiana Jones, Moon Landings are all big draws. Big of course is a relative term. This blog has been averaging about 15 readers per day. My maximum in 1 day (that I know of) was just over 80. The average this week was around 25. I realize that some of the 'readers' I am seeing are just robots or data mining sites, but when they find something that, in the programming, is found interesting, they leave blog replies. Some of the people who come to read just won't do it.

I know a couple of the 'shy' people, and I don't really expect replies from them (they know who they are). There are others that I think would be very interesting to hear from.

Things I would like to know about you. How did you find this blog? What do you want to read here? What country/state are you from? Do you come back often? Am I boring you? Just pop in to say hello. Again, until you are 'vetted' (good political term, no?) your replies will only be seen by me, or maybe the owner of the place, he once 'hacked' in for a April Fools joke... But he is a good friend of mine, almost like a long lost brother. So if you don't want them to be seen, let me know in the response, and I'll get rid of it. Me, I'm just curious...

Other things I want to know. Why is a site in Russia interested in my blogs on Superman Movies? Why isn't the same

site interested in Batman? Just wondering..

This is just stuff I was thinking about this Saturday morning...

Loaded with tags, just for fun? Just having a bit of fun, that's what blogging is all about.

Another take on Haunted Houses...

I've always been a big fan of Halloween and Haunted Houses, so when our little theater started to look into doing something like this, I jumped at the chance. The very first "Haunted House" I went to was actually someone's house. Just for Halloween they would bring in a real casket, and the owner of the house was dressed as Dracula. The candy dish was placed on his chest. Every so often he would move to grab a kid. Sent you right through the roof. Of course you wanted to be that kid he moved on because his wife (a witch) would give you an extra candy bar.

Now on to other haunted houses and Halloween. Believe it or not, there are people who don't like haunted houses. For some it has everything to do with their religion. Now, as long as they aren't out there preventing my fun, my hat is off to these folks. To take a stand, because of their moral views, counter to the societal views is laudable. Others are simply frightened too much by them, and they don't enjoy it. Nothing wrong with that either.

There is a third group. They may or may not belong to either of the two other groups. People who have experienced a loss of someone close (spouse, sibling, parent) may not like the idea

of having fun with death. While I've lost a brother and both parents, the loss of my wife made me see this more. The other deaths could be explained away (didn't help the grief, but the logic was there). My wife's death was something out of the blue. Never saw it coming. Generally her family had very long life spans. I could then see how people would be upset and troubled with the fundamental ideas behind Halloween and Haunted Houses. The gravestones, skeletons, zombies, ghouls and ghost can all bring up some troubling memories. I can see where that would really change a person's view on the whole Halloween event. And that doesn't even go into the sight of seeing something in a Halloween display that reminds you of your loved one's death. That is very troubling.

So I guess because of this, I do draw a few lines. I don't like, and won't go to a haunted house based on a hospital. I don't like haunted houses with a lot of suicide themes. There are other things that can be just as scary that don't touch these areas. It just takes a bit of insight.

Of course, even after my wife's death, I couldn't completely give up on Halloween, it was one of her favorite holidays. I can have fond memories of past Halloweens by carrying on the celebration of the day in the future.

Happy Haunting...

The Sandusky Haunting...

I was one of the "Brave and foolhardy" souls that went through [Ghostly Manor](#) three times. I really enjoyed my trips through the haunted manor. Now I will admit that there were a few things that startled me, all three times we went through the manor. This is one of the best haunted houses I've been

through. The 4 actors in the house did a wonderful job keeping us on our toes. This is a slow period for them, so they could pay attention to the groups that went through. To startle us more, they would pop up in different areas than the last time we went through.

This house is definitely a high budget, top of the line haunted house. The animated figures, and amount of work that went into this house are top of the line. I will have to admit to having a self serving motive for going through three times. Our Little theater (see links on the side) is in the process of planning our own "Haunted Tour". Not the normal haunted house with dark mazes and tight winding hallways. We don't have the budget or manpower to pull that off. We need ways to scare people that have more to do with theatrics, and less to do with the hardware. If this group of actors can't scare people, I don't know who can.

I think I found a few things that gave me pause during the tours, that could be done on a limited budget. On the second third trips, I was able to concentrate on the hows, wheres and whys of the way things startled me. The first time through I was letting go, just to have a good time. I think we even thought of ways to improve the house we went through. May have to go back to see if they listened.

I have to clean my truck too.

Yep, I was also at the wild animal park with a couple of other bloggers on [Tangent's](#). Check out their stories [here](#) and [here](#).

I had a lot of fun on my latest trip to the African Safari Park in Port Clinton. This year was a slightly different experience for me. Number 1 it was the first time I ever took

my own vehicle into the park. Number 2 was that this year I had back window that could open all the way. My very first experience with this park was back in the 1970's. They still had lions in an area you could drive through. Having lions right outside your vehicle is something else. I'm sure the insurance cost and the safety of the animals brought this practice to an end. As much as I like the big cats, I think this is a better park for not having them there.

Now on to what they did have. Lots of Elk. To have one of these large members of the deer family stick their head in your vehicle is really something. To have 4 of them at once, that is beyond belief. Of course they do want to be fed, and are looking, and smelling for handouts. One even took a whole bag of carrots, but we got them back, I don't think she liked the bag.

Then there were some smaller deer and antelope roaming the area. They were a well behaved when compared to their larger brethren. They seemed a little bit shy this year, compared to last year's visit. Maybe they were just well fed and had no need to come up to the cars and trucks.

On to the American Bison, and very large cattle. I had the "pleasure" of going face to face with an American Bison on the ride through the park. This does tend to make me a bit leery, since I know someone who has a bison ranch, and I've seen first hand what one of those animals can do to a truck when they want to. These bison seem very friendly, but they do have terrible breath. They really seemed to like walking with the vehicles as they drive through. We had one that was only interested in the carrots, and would not take the other dried pellets the park sells. The cattle were something else. I saw two types, both had very large horns, but one had very long hair. My youngest called him Ludo last year, because he reminded her of the Large creature from the movie [Labyrinth](#). We did manage to save a carrot for him. The other two long horned cattle had horns about 4 to 5 feet long each and the

base was at least 12 in circumference. Big horns. That did stop these fellows from sticking their head too far into the truck, but they had very long tongues to make up for that.

Then on the the area where the other animals were enclosed away from the vehicles. Among these were Giraffes, Zebras and a Giant Eland. Even they got close to the fences looking for handouts.

Everything about the early part of the day was great fun. Everybody got to get as much of the animal experience as they wanted, and I think we went away happy. A little damp, from drool, but happy.

And I got a photo of me with a rather large snake. Not that I really think these would make a good pet for me, but I am strangely drawn to these fascinating creatures.

I'm trying to find out the names of the large cattle, hopefully they are on the brochure. They don't appear to be on the [website](#)

Suffering a loss

Today touched on many memories for me. Today I went to a funeral to support someone I've known for a few years. I knew him through the theater and her through church. Our interests, outside of the community theater are different. Even our views in the theater are different, but today that makes little difference to me. Today we share a common bond. Today we are both widowers. Will that make us close friends, not likely, but I guess it could happen. Things like that happen everyday, but it isn't what I mean.

He is at the very start of his journey of widow/erhood. I've been on the journey for 4 years and almost 8 months. We became brothers in the same journey. It is very much a journey. The trouble is that, as in life, we all journey this path in our own way. Today, I offered any support I could give. I made this offer from my heart. I know as well as any man could some of the things that will occur for him in the next few days, weeks and months. But I don't know how he will approach or handle the events that will happen. I can only be around to listen. It is a lonely journey that he faces. A journey where you take help when you find it, but all the choice you make must be the right choices for yourself.

The funeral was in the church my wife and I attended for over 10 years before she died. She had many wonderful talents, and the church was her place to share them. I see her touch in many areas of this church. Things have changed, but they remain the same.

The funeral was for a lady that also touched the church in many ways. She had been there for close to 30 years. For years to come her legacy will remain with the church. Things have changed, but they remain the same.

Today I saw again a sister in the same journey. She lost her husband a year before I lost my wife. We still have that bond. It unites and separates us. Grieving is different for all.

People dying at much too early an age. But then again, I see where I've been and I have a sense of where I am heading. Not the life I would have chosen, but the one I was given. Mine to do what I can. Things have changed, but they remain the same.

When I can I offer support to those on this journey. The best support I can offer is that I have been on the journey. There are many lights to guide you on the path. Many come before, and many follow. Drop a light every now and again to guide those who follow. Follow the lights of those that when

before...

Funny thing about blogging

The reason I blog is given at the top of my blog page. I use this spot to generally clear my head when I start thinking too much. Sometimes I actually write about the thoughts in my head (now for instance), other times I just write about things I think are interesting. I'm here because I want to be here. If I had no readers at all that would be enough for me (I've done journals the same way for the past few years, just to get things out). This is replacing any journals I've had. I don't ever really write anything that I would consider inner secrets. Secrets are only kept if no one knows about them. People have been able to read my handwriting before, so a written journal is no place to keep secrets.

Now for the other reasons I write this blog, and why it replaced my journal. I know that I have friends and family that read things here, and it gives me a small way to keep in touch. Some of the friends and occasionally family will reply and let me know what they think of my blogging. Others will email me on their thoughts. Both let me know that there is some interest in what I have to write.

What I find interesting, is that I look at the stats to my blog (check the right hand column, minor stats are there) and I see a larger number of people will read my blog on occasion. Most of them never respond. So I really have no way of knowing if this blog is of any interest too them. I can tell that there are a few repeat viewers, but I don't know who they are yet. As far as I can tell, some people are really getting to know me, while I sit in the dark about them. Oh well, some

people are born to lurk...

Just was thinking about that as my visitor count went from the normal 12-15 visitors/day to a count of just over 20 in less than 5 minutes... So to you 8+ new visitors, I bid you welcome. Hope you found something useful.

-- Just saying Hi to all the lurkers again--

What to write about now?

Well the summer is winding down and the Big blockbuster movies are just about done. This week the Olympics are in full force. And we will be getting to the US political conventions very soon.

I can't think of thing there that I want to put in my blog. I may review a movie or two, but I don't see any coming out that warrant a review. I'm not at all sure about the animated [Star Wars](#) film. I think Star Wars is a but played out. I have a daughter who is really into Star Wars, so I'll let her handle that review if she wants to.

The movies I've seen that may get a future review are few. I had fun in the 3rd Mummy movie, as long as I kept it in my head that it wasn't the first two. There were some funny parts, but I don't think of it as a continuation of the series.

Politics... Not in this blog thank you very much. The only political statement I'll make is that we are subject to a campaign season that is way too long.

Olympics – Well Tiger Woods isn't in it so it can't be worth watching.. No wait that's the PGA.. Anyway, no blogs on the

Olympics either.

My favorite team looks to be done for the season, so I won't be blogging about baseball much. There are some bigger fans of teams that are doing well, so I won't have to.

NFL – Nah, don't see it, unless it is the Bears game at C and L's.. Great fun watching games there.

Maybe as the mosquitoes die off, I can get my telescopes out again. Way to many bugs in the evening to have much fun watching stars. When they can bite through the mosquito suit, there are too many of them.

Oh well, I'll just watch for strange and unusual news, that may be enough to keep this going. And School is starting and my youngest will be in her High School's show choir. That should be fun. I'm going to let my daughter blog about her own wedding plans, unless it affects me to a greater degree.

Maybe I will have things to write about. We will see, what we will see.